

MINUTES
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF YORK

Adjourned Meeting
April 25, 2000

6:30 p.m.

Meeting Convened. An Adjourned Meeting of the York County Board of Supervisors was called to order at 6:37 p.m., Tuesday, April 25, 2000, in the East Room, York Hall, by Vice Chairman James S. Burgett.

Attendance. The following members of the Board of Supervisors were present: Donald E. Wiggins, James S. Burgett, and Melanie L. Rapp.

Mr. Zaremba and Mrs. Noll were absent.

Also in attendance were Daniel M. Stuck, County Administrator; and James E. Barnett, County Attorney.

WORK SESSION

YORK HALL USE ISSUES

Mr. Stuck asked the Board members if they had any questions about the materials which were presented to them concerning the possible uses of York Hall.

Mr. Wiggins stated he was a member on both of the previous committees, and he read all the material and did not have any questions. He indicated he felt it was now a matter of deciding what functions would go in the building and where.

Vice Chairman Burgett stated a general philosophy was needed as to how the building was going to be used. He stated he did not want to see any of the building used for storage, and he would like all of the rooms to be used. He noted he was not interested in any of the space being used for retail purposes other than perhaps a small gift shop. Mr. Burgett stated it was important that the Board find a home for the Historical Committee's museum, but perhaps not to take up the entire basement of the building. He indicated the next question to answer was who would manage the building. He spoke of the valuable equipment contained in the building and stated he felt it should be operated by staff who knew what they were doing. He stated he was leaning toward County management and having someone in the building during the times when the building was being used.

Mr. Wiggins agreed with Mr. Burgett, stating he felt the building should be handled by the County because it has a large investment in York Hall. He then noted that the Fife and Drum Corps had representatives present, and he asked them just what it was that the Corps wanted relative to York Hall.

Mrs. Beth Wilson, representing the Fife and Drum Corps, indicated the Corps needed a place where it could get out of inclement weather to practice. She stated they prefer to practice outside, and they don't need indoor space on a regular basis. She also stated they do not need any storage space. Mrs. Wilson noted the Fife and Drum Corps meets every Tuesday from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Discussion followed concerning the fact that the Fife and Drum Corps meets when the Board of Supervisors would be conducting its regular meetings or work sessions, at which time the Board members suggested other places the Fife and Drum Corps might try for the use of indoor space on Tuesdays. Also discussed was prior problems encountered when the Corps practiced in the basement of the Courthouse years ago and the supervision that would be supplied by the organization and its parents today.

Vice Chairman Burgett then stated he felt the process developed by staff for allocating space was very well done and very fair and logical. He reiterated that he was in favor of County management of the building.

Mr. Stuck noted that the Board would also have to make a decision as to whether or not to charge for non-County use of the building. He stated that as the Board members make that decision, they will run into other issues once the building is opened for non-County use. He indicated that by doing so, the Board won't necessarily have control over who uses the building. By opening it to one group or organization, the Board may be forced to allow its use by other groups that might not necessarily be groups that the Board would want using the building. He suggested that before making any final decisions on the use of the building the Board establish some written guidelines, approved by the County Attorney, for specific kinds of uses to be accommodated. He discussed the types of groups and whether or not York Hall should be used instead of other facilities that might be rented. He suggested that the Board give a great deal of thought to this issue, and he explained the problems that have been encountered in allowing use of other County buildings such as the meeting room in the Public Safety Building to non-County groups.

Mr. Wiggins indicated this was why he felt the County needed to manage the building.

Mr. Stuck asked if the Board thought parts of the building should be used for office space or retail space. He also stated he was not clear as to what the Trustees were requesting.

Vice Chairman Burgett stated he did not believe the building should be used for a rental hall for receptions and such. He stated he would like to see it more County-government related. There are other facilities available in the area for retail and catered reception-type functions.

Miss Rapp expressed her agreement that because of the investment in the building and the expense of wear and tear on the building over time that it should not be used for commercial purposes.

Mr. Stuck suggested that another option to consider was the possibility of having some sort of retail shop, art gallery, or museum as a permanent resident and working an arrangement with them for supervision of the building during the hours the activity was open. If the Historical Committee was going to operate a museum in the basement, perhaps an arrangement could be worked out with them to monitor activity in the building while their activity was in operation. Other possible activities Mr. Stuck suggested included a tourism office or having a retail gift shop run by the Victory Center or the National Park Service.

Vice Chairman Burgett suggested that the main hall be opened for concerts and cultural activities.

Mr. Wiggins asked if the television equipment for the East Room had been ordered.

Mr. Stuck explained that the Request for Proposals was just being completed, and the order should go out in a few days.

Miss Rapp noted that only four groups had requested space in the building.

Mr. J. Mark Carter, Assistant to the County Administrator, indicated that only four had made formal requests.

Miss Rapp again addressed the use of the building by the Fife and Drum Corps, and asked if the main first floor room would be adequate.

Mrs. Wilson indicated it would.

Miss Rapp suggested that the East Room could be used by the Trustees if all they needed was a meeting place. She asked what need they had for storage and display.

Mr. Carter stated the Trustees have several things that have been gathered by them over time, and they would like some place in Yorktown to put them on display.

Miss Rapp indicated the Board would need to know exactly what kind of display case the Trustees were considering and what it would contain.

Mr. Wiggins suggested that perhaps the Historical Committee's museum could display the Trustees' items.

Mrs. Bonnie Karwac, Chairman of the York County Historical Committee, indicated the Committee would be happy to work with the Trustees.

Discussion followed on the current meeting place of the Yorktown Trustees. The Board also discussed space needs for the Historical Committee's museum.

Mr. Wiggins asked if the Historical Committee had a plan for use of the space.

Mrs. Karwac explained that they had a couple of volunteers who were professional museum people who have talked with the Committee about what it needed to do to make sure the items were properly preserved. She indicated the Committee has about \$18,000 to begin its museum, and it has a number of display cases. A new member of the Committee has offered to set up a data log-in program for accurately cataloging all the items. She stated the Committee has worked with the Victory Center about making sure they get the museum off on the right foot. Mrs. Karwac also indicated the Peninsula Museums Forum would be helping the Committee, and eventually there might be a need for a paid person.

Miss Rapp asked if the County has approached On-the-Hill to determine if they have any interest in changing locations.

Mr. Stuck stated no contact has been made in the last three or four years. There had been some general discussion about the possibility, but none has taken place since. He then noted that one of the earlier committees had recommended the possibility of having rotating displays or exhibits going on in the building, but in order to do so, there would have to be an active management and marketing of the facility.

Mr. Wiggins suggested that for such a rotating premise to work there would need to be arrangements made with other museums and exhibitors to ensure adequate rotation of different exhibits on a regular basis.

Mr. Gary Freeman, 120 Ballard Street, noted there were many traveling exhibits sponsored by foundations that pay for them to be exhibited.

Discussion followed concerning the different kinds of programs that could be exhibited at York Hall. The Board members also entertained the idea of having the Arts Commission manage exhibits that would be conducted in the building.

Vice Chairman Burgett recommended that the Board follow the staff's recommended process for evaluating and making space allocations, but he stated he felt all five Board members needed to be present to make the decision on the actual allocations.

Mr. Stuck indicated the need to start looking for some use guidelines from other jurisdictions which have tried to run a facility such as York Hall. He stated if the Board is comfortable with this type of process, staff will get busy setting up a tour according to the recommendation.

Mr. Wiggins indicated he felt a member of the Parks and Recreation staff should be available for the tour. He noted that as a member of the previous committees, the main thing that everyone agreed on and wanted was some type of meeting room where different groups could meet for cultural events. He stated he felt the main hall would be the only room in the building suitable for such a purpose.

Mr. Freeman noted that when committee members went to other counties and talked to the State about York Hall and how it could be used, it was felt that facilities that are managed by the jurisdiction were a constant drain on the locality's funds. He stated it was felt that the project combination of the locality providing the building and paying for the maintenance of the building with a non-profit organization providing the management was a more focused and equitable arrangement.

Mr. Wiggins stated he felt that staff needed to get all the prospective users of the building together to take a tour through the building as proposed by the staff.

Vice Chairman Burgett noted his agreement.

Mr. Stuck stated he felt staff had a pretty good idea of what the four organizations are looking for, but they would invite them and see who else might be out there looking for space.

Mr. Wiggins suggested that staff contact the Watermen's Museum because they have some great volunteers, and the gift shop/retail space might be a good place for them. It might also be possible that the Watermen's Museum could handle the tourism aspect for the County and keep an eye on the building as well.

Vice Chairman Burgett expressed his concerns regarding using space for retail purposes and the potential problems.

Mr. Stuck explained that instead of a lease, the County would grant a permit which could cover some of the potential problems.

Miss Rapp discussed the need for usage guidelines.

Mr. Stuck stated if the Board could give staff some idea of what it felt the general occupancy of the building should be, staff could come up with some draft guidelines for the Board to review.

After further discussion, the Board indicated that the Board Room and the East Room should be used for government-only purposes, and none of the building would be leased for activities such as receptions.

Mr. Barnett then discussed the drafting of guidelines for usage of the building and the need to do some research on the definition of certain activities. He indicated the Board might be charting some new ground legally, and he stated he would check with other jurisdictions to see what they are doing.

Mr. Stuck indicated one way to address it was to turn the rest of the facility over to a non-profit organization to manage, but he noted the Board would have to have confidence in the chosen organization.

Mr. Freeman noted he could provide the Board with the names of some groups that might be interested in such an arrangement.

Mr. Robert S. Kraus, Director of General Services, stated it sounded like the Board had agreed that the County would manage the facility in terms of scheduling and maintenance, but for the building to be successful, he stated it needed marketing. He asked the Board if the County would address that aspect.

Vice Chairman Burgett indicated he felt Mr. Kraus had a good point.

Mr. Stuck suggested that perhaps the staff should prepare a set of draft guidelines first before setting up the tour with potential users. He stated that at the same time staff would move forward with the process of evaluating the space allocations.

Discussion ensued on the timing of the evaluation process. The Board agreed that the guidelines would be drafted first, and staff would then go forward with implementing the recommended process for evaluating and making space allocations. It was also agreed that no space would be used primarily for storage purposes.

WORK SESSION SCHEDULE (Not on Agenda)

The Board members briefly discussed the draft meeting schedule which was provided to them on April 4, and it was approved as recommended.

April 25, 2000

Meeting Adjourned. At 8:03 p.m. Vice Chairman Burgett declared the meeting adjourned sine die.

Daniel M. Stuck, Clerk
York County Board of Supervisors

Walter C. Zaremba, Chairman
York County Board of Supervisors